

## HOUSE RESOLUTION 4

By McCormick

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Ralph Wilson Mohny, Sr., of Chattanooga.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Ralph Wilson Mohny, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohny was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, instrumental in the education and spiritual lives of so many, Dr. Ralph Mohny served as President of Tennessee Wesleyan College and as an evangelist and minister to countless seekers and believers; and

WHEREAS, one of four sons of Dr. and Mrs. Silas Mohny, Ralph Mohny was born and raised in Lexington, Kentucky, where he attended Transylvania College and from which he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree; and

WHEREAS, having received the call to ministry while a student in college, Dr. Mohny continued his education for many more years, earning a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University, a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Boston University, and a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1959 from Emory and Henry College in Emory, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohny began his pastoral work while a student at Vanderbilt, serving the churches of the Bethesda Circuit, and he further developed his skills while a student in the Boston area, when he was appointed interim pastor of Winter Street Congregational Church in Bath, Maine; and

WHEREAS, after moving to Chattanooga in 1945 to become the pastor of Manker Memorial Methodist Church, Dr. Ralph Mohny also assumed the chaplaincy of the Chattanooga Police Department, served as President of both the Methodist Ministers

Association and the Chattanooga Pastors Association, and chaired the Citywide Evangelistic Crusade, which, with its 129 member churches, provided the foundation for the Billy Graham Crusade; and

WHEREAS, while attending the World Conference of Christian Youth as a delegate in 1947, Dr. Ralph Mohney met the woman who would become his wife, the former Nell Webb, who was conference director of Youth Ministries in the Western North Carolina Conference. A short time later, they both became involved with the first Methodist Youth Caravan in Poland, and they married on December 31, 1948, thus beginning a lifelong “team ministry”; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohney moved to Knoxville in 1950 to assume the duty of senior minister at the Washington Pike Church and assumed the post of superintendent of the Kingsport District just six years later; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Dr. Ralph Mohney became the President of Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee, overseeing that institution of higher learning during one of its greatest periods of growth; and

WHEREAS, having completed his tenure at Tennessee Wesleyan College, he moved to Chattanooga in 1965, after his appointment as the senior minister of Centenary Church, which, in 1967, he succeeded in unifying with another revered downtown Methodist congregation, First Methodist Church, creating the vital First-Centenary Church; and

WHEREAS, after serving from 1981 to 1987 at First Broad Street Church in Kingsport, Dr. Mohney and his wife were asked to serve the General Board of Discipleship, an experience that ultimately resulted in two books, co-authored by the couple, concerning the rapid expansion of several Methodist churches; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohney was named the Distinguished Evangelist in Residence with the General Board of Discipleship in 1990 and joined with his colleague Joe Harding to create “VISION 2000,” a design for reinvigorating and expanding local churches, which they then detailed in the book *VISION 2000: Preparing for Ministry in the Next Century*; and

WHEREAS, upon retirement, Dr. Ralph Mohney was named pastor emeritus of the First-Centenary Church in Chattanooga, the congregation he had been so instrumental in reshaping and expanding; and

WHEREAS, in addition to those posts and duties already mentioned, Dr. Mohney also chaired the World Peace Commission and the Commission on Christian Higher Education, served as a member of the General Board of Christian Social Concerns and the General Council on Finance and Administration Executive Committee, stood as President of the Holston Conference Council on Finance and Administration, became a member of the General Council on Finance and Administration Executive Committee, served as the Director of the Holston Conference Foundation, and stood as a delegate to General Conferences, Jurisdictional Conferences, and the World Conference of the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohney was honored with the 2008 Distinguished Service Award from the Downtown Kiwanis Club, and he has been listed in *Who's Who of America* since 1962; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ralph Mohney was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohney is survived by his wife of nearly sixty years, Nell Webb Mohney, his son and daughter-in-law Ralph and Jacki Mohney, and his two grandchildren, Ellen Mohney Gray and Wesley Mohney; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ralph Mohney was preceded in death by his son Richard Bentley Mohney; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mohney leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional educator, minister, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Dr. Ralph Wilson Mohney, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Dr. Mohney.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.